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Program and constitution, Workers Party of America

New York

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Workers Party of America

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Adopted
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Eugene Bechtold
Chicago, Ill.

Preface

The first convention of the Workers Party was held in New York City, December 24-25-26. One hundred and fifty delegates were present, representing organizations from nearly every state. This convention was not born of the desires of any group of ambitious persons; but was the natural outgrowth of developments within the revolutionary movement in America during the years since the Russian Revolution and the end of the World War—aye, since the very beginning of the war itself.

At the St. Louis convention of the Socialist Party in 1917 the Left tendencies were coming to the fore, which was shown by the anti-war resolution then adopted; but it could be easily seen that opportunism had by no means lost the fight. The opportunistic leaders of the S. P. were not sincere supporters of the St. Louis Resolution; later events showed that many who supported that resolution were merely playing for time. They were mere pacifists who never intended to fight for the St. Louis Resolution.

In January prior to the St. Louis convention, a unity conference was held between representatives of the Socialist Party and the Socialist Labor Party. The Left elements in the S. P. had grown strong enough to bring about this conference through a referendum vote. This class-conscious element was looking about for new leadership, the old leaders were beginning to lose their hold; besides that, they were ready to end the deplorable condition created by having two parties of socialism. The S. L. P. was beginning to grow into favor with the new growing "left wing" because of its decided stand against opportunism. The S. L. P. delegation refused to unite in any way unless the S. P. would endorse the principle of industrial unionism. This the S. P. delegates could easily refuse to do. Unity falied.

It is true that the S. L. P. is not opportunistic; but it has the failing that is the twin brother of opportunism—doctrinairism. It had no confidence in the strong left-wing revolutionary elements in the

S. P. unless the S. P. would officially go on record for a statement of the only correct and pure principles. Besides this, the S. L. P. withdrew all its anti-militarist literature as soon as the U. S. went into the war and showed a most cowardly attitude toward the government. New leadership naturally developed in the S. P. that began contending with the old Berger-Hillquit forces of opportunism. The left wing split; the subsequent formation of the Communist parties which eventually were driven under ground are matters too well known to repeat in detail here.

During all this time the struggle of the workers in industry to maintain their old standard of living broke out in fierce conflicts involving larger numbers than ever known before. The need for a political party capable of taking practical leadership became ever more urgent, until at last the many scattered elements that had left either the S. P. or the S. L. P. began to regroup themselves, forming the American Labor Alliance and the Workers' Council. Many language organizations held their federations into line. It was these organizations that finally formed the convention that launched the Workers Party.

In presenting the program and constitution of the Workers Party we wish to comment briefly to meet the objections of both the doctrianaire and the opportunist. To the practical man of action, no comments are necessary, for the documents speak for themselves. The revolutionary movement in America was dominated by the extremes, above mentioned, so much so in this country that a program of action will be misunderstood.

He is the doctrinaire who believes that the sole duty of a revolutionary party is o preach he class-struggle and outline the final aim ——the workers' republic, the socialist commonwealth, or whatever name he chooses to call it. Battles in the every-day struggle should not interest the Party except to be used as a means of criticism; to show the futility of struggling over mere wages, or the folly of moving behind false leaders who do not preach the class struggle. The doctrinaire knows the masses must be with him to achieve the revolution; but he is going to get the masses by preaching the new doctrine in its purity, and he will have nothing to do with immediate demands.

The opportunist, on the other hand, lays strong emphasis upon immediate demands. He does not overlook the final aim, but he does insist that the masses are not intelligent enough to understand remote, abstract theories such as socialism. The Party must be practical and offer immediate demands.

Immediate demands ARE practical. Thus far the opportunist is right, but he always fails by the kind of demand he offers, and the purpose of these demands. The opportunist makes demands to dull the class struggle; the revolutionist makes demands to sharpen it. Cheap milk, cheap ice, municipal ownership, etc., are all demands that the capitalist state can meet with ease. Such demands are not made with the idea of destroying confidence in, and eventually disrupting, the capitalist state machine. They are sentimental demands "in the interest of suffering humanity."

Because the Workers Party has seven demands in its Program the doctrinaire says the Party is opportunistic; the opportunists say "they are no different from us." Quite the contrary. Whether the State attempts to meet the demands or fails to do so, the effect will be the same, if the workers are united by the Workers Party to make them, a weakening and eventual disruption of the capitalist state machinery will ensue.

Remember the demands of the Russian Workers—demands that brought on the revolution—"Peace, Land, Bread!" Such demands grow out of the struggle of proletarian life with capitalist decay; such demands must be met or otherwise we are fastened in doctrinaire sterility like the S. L. P. Demands must be met intelligently or we slump into the mire of opportunistic mud like the S. P.

We call attention to the complete working Program of the Workers Party and leave the practical thinking wage worker to judge between it and the extreme programs of the past.

The Constitution speaks for itself as a document representing centralized, efficient organization that can act promptly and intelligently in time of crisis.

CALEB HARRISON, National Secretary.

Program of the Workers Party of America

The Great War has brought untold misery and chaos in its wake. Millions of workers have been maimed and slaughtered in the conflict of the imperialist governments. Capitalist society is face to face with social and industrial collapse. Kingdoms and empires have disappeared; but republics, ruled by an exploiting class more powerful and more unscrupulous than the kings and emperors, have taken their place.

National hatred rules the world. In spite of peace treaties and international conferences, the relations between the nations are more strained than ever. Intense commercial rivalry, and the resentment of the weak and vanquished nations against their victorious oppressors, are a constant menace to world peace. The capitalists, dismayed at the chaos, and yet unable to understand it or even to contemplate its economic causes, are blindly steering the world towards new wars.

In Germany and Austria, the masses are being bled to meet the exorbitant war indemnities. In England, France and Italy, an impoverished proletariat is paying for armaments on a larger and more stupendous scale than ever before. Every battleship that is built and every shell that is manufactured, adds to the profits of the exploiters and increases the poverty of the wage slaves.

Even before this war social legislation met only inadequately the needs of a proletariat condemned to the uncertainties of existence under capitalism. Today it is a farce. No lasting improvement of the condition of the workingman under capitalism is any longer dreamed of. More than ever before, hunger and want are rife among the workers. And the violent uprisings that result are met with merciless suppression by the master class. All capitalist governments are openly fighting the battles of

the employers. The legislatures, courts and the executive powers stand behind them. The struggle of the workers even for the most elementary necessities of life is met with ruthless persecution, and tends to become a fight for political power—a revolutionary struggle.

The Workers party will base its policies on the international nature of this struggle. It will strive to make the American labor movement an integral part of the revolutionary movement of the workers of the world. The Workers Party will expose the Second International, which is continually splitting the ranks of labor and betraying the working masses to the enemy. It will also warn and guard the workers against the attempt of the so-called Two-and-a-Half International to mislead them.

Disillusioned by the cowardly and traitorous conduct of their own leaders, and inspired by the proletarian revolution in Russia, the workers of the world have organized the Communist International. Despite the bitter opposition of the Capitalists and their labor lieutenants, the Communist International is growing rapidly. It has become a world power, the citadel and hope of the workers of every country.

Even America, the bulwark of world capitalism, is suffering acutely from the general disorganization. Its economic and financial life has been caught in the violent, swirling maelstrom of war. Because of the catastrophic depreciation of European currency it can find no outlet for the products of its industry. Its foreign trade has declined approximately fifty per cent. Armies of unemployed crowd the cities. Millions are out of work. War prosperity is ended. The bread lines have come. Capitalism is totally unable to cope with the situation. Its utter helplessness was revealed at the recent Government Unemployment Conference. Nowhere is there a serious effort to ameliorate this condition. On the contrary, the employers are using it to increase their power of exploitation and oppression. The steel corporation, the oil industry, the railroads, the meat-packing and textile industries have already made heavy cuts in the workers'

pay. A powerful open-shop campaign is being waged by the Employers' Association. Even the soldiers who have given their all in the fight for capitalist "democracy," are now clubbed and jailed at the first sign of protest against the destitution forced upon them by this same "democracy," which is in fact a dictatorship of the exploiting class .Everywhere it is robbing the workers of the small gains they have won through many years of struggle.

Imperialism

For generations the workers have been producing a surplus over and above what they have received in wages. A part of this surplus the capitalists have invested in the development and exploitation of the industrially backward countries of Asia, Africa and South America. These countries have been cowed into submission as colonies or "spheres of influence." In order to safeguard their investments in these countries, European and American capitalists have seized control of the local governments and oppressed and terrorized the native populations. Today these exploited and oppressed people, inspired by the Russian Revolution, are demanding freedom. In China, in India and Egypt, in Haiti, in the Philippines, in South Africa, in Mexico and South America—everywhere the spirit of revolt is awakening with new strength and momentum. The Great Powers are still arming to the teeth in order to maintain their domination over the colonial peoples, and protect the privileges of their own capitalists against encroachments from those of other nations. Neither the League of Nations nor the Washington Conference with its "Association of Powers," has been able to solve the problem arising from these conflicts of national business interests.

American Imperialism

The history of America has been a history of economic expansion. Acquisition of new territory was characteristic of the first fifty years of the last century. The forcible annexation of Texas was but the most ruthless example of early American expansion. The modern imperialist era begins with the acquisition of the Philippine

Islands, Porto Rico, and the hegemony over Cuba. This was followed by the seizure of the Panama Canal Zone through a staged "revolution" against Colombia. Intervening in Santo Domingo, Haiti and Nicaraugua at the behest of Wall Street, the United States Government has added these Central American Republics to its spheres of influnce. The islands of Guam and Samoa in the Pacific, and the Virgin Islands in the Carribean Sea, are the more recent loot that has fallen to the American imperialists.

Thus the United States has also its subject peoples, and it is fast acquiring a reputation which rivals that of the British in India and of the Belgians in the Congo. The savage treatment accorded the natives of some of these islands by the armies of occupation and the civil authorities has become an international scandal.

Soviet Russia

While the leading powers are thus arming and conspiring against one another in the exploitation of subject peoples, they are united in their hatred of Soviet Russia. Russia, the Workers' Republic, stands clearly opposed to the imperialist nations that are under the rule of a capitalist dictatorship. Russia, having established the dictatorship of the proletariat, cultivates international working class solidarity as a means to thwart the machinations of world imperialism.

For more than four years the Soviet Government of the Workers and Peasants has stood unshaken before the continued attacks of international capitalism. The death-dealing blockade, the incited attacks of the Czarist generals, the criminal onslaught of the Polish imperialists, the crop failure, and the famine due to drought—all these have failed to undermine the Soviet Government. Today it is more firmly established than ever. The Workers' Party looks to Soviet Russia for leadership in the struggle against world imperialism.

Our Labor Movement

The present moment finds but a small part of the working class of America organized for the purpose of

abolishing capitalism. Of all the powerful nations America alone lacks a well developed proletarian political movement.

The Socialist Party reached its zenith with the St. Louis anti-war resolution. Its vigorous opposition to America's participation in the imperialist war brought into the party a flood of enthusiasm and life. But its leaders were not true to the declared attitude of the party, and this resulted in the development of a virile revolutionary faction which was expelled when it defeated the conservative leadership in the 1919 party elections. Since then the Socialist party has shown its utter inability to lead the workers in their struggle. It has persistently compromised with the very enemy it is supposed to be fighting. Instead of attempting to free the workers from the ideologies which the capitalists spread, the Socialist Party has assumed the role of the only true defender of the American constitution. Instead of exposing the sham and fraud of capitalist dictatorship masquerading as democracy and representative government, the Socialist Party has taken pains to glorify our "common heritage of democracy." Instead of pointing out to the worker that free speech and a free press are incompatible with capitalist dictatorship, it has devoted its energy to praising these "American rights." Such policies, combined with its failure to respond to the everyday needs and struggles of the workers, have completely discredited the Socialist Party. Its recent effort to unite the so-called progressive labor elements and the Farmer-Labor Party into some sort of moderate Socialist organization, has been a total failure.

The Socialist Labor Party, in spite of its proud boast of revolutionary purity and correctness, is moribund. Its insistence upon destroying the American Federation of Labor, and supplanting the existing labor unions with unions of its own creation, brands it as impractical and reactionary in outlook. It has not succeeded in gaining any influence in the American Labor Movement, and like the Socialist Party, it has failed to respond to the clarion call of the Russian Workers.

The Farmer-Labor Party was organized by an anti-

Gompers element in the American Federation of Labor, together with former Socialists. It was an attempt to capitalize existing popular discontent without the drawback of a supposedly unpopular label. It offers to the workers a program of social reform and "industrial democracy," but very carefully avoids declaring its attitude towards the existence of the capitalist system. Far from receiving the support of the large masses of progressive labor unions, the Farmer-Labor Party has utterly failed as a uniting force even among the conscious element of the American working class.

The Non-Partisan League was developed by the working farmers of the Northwest to resist a ruthless capitalist exploitation. It captured the entire machinery of government from the exploiters in 1918, but nevertheless proved powerless to inaugurate a program of State ownership. For four years these oppressed farmers, in possession of the local parliamentary machinery, have struggled against an organized capitalist blockade. This struggle has culminated in the defeat of the League in the recent elections — another failure of the reformist principle.

There has been up to the present no political organization that could lead and unify the workers against capitalism. With the Workers Party such an organization makes its appearance in American life.

The Workers Party will centralize and direct the struggle of the laboring masses against the powerfully centralized opposition of their exploiters. It will courageously defend the workers, and wage an aggressive struggle for the abolition of capitalism. Its general program will be:

1. To consolidate the existing labor organizations and develop them into organs of militant struggle against capitalism, permeate the Trade Unions with truly revolutionary elements, mercilessly expose the reactionary labor bureaucrats and strive to replace them with revolutionary leaders.

2. To participate actively in the election campaigns and the general political life of the country. Its repre-

sentatives in the legislative and executive offices of the government will unmask the fraudulent Capitalist democracy, and help to mobilize the workers for the final struggle against the common enemy. They will give conscious and public expression to the everyday grievances of the working class in concrete demands upon the capitalist government and its institutions.

3. To lead in the fight for the immediate needs of the workers, broaden and deepen their demands, and develop out of their everyday struggle a force for the abolition of capitalism.

4. To work for the establishment of a Workers' Republic.

Congressional Campaign of 1922

In preparation for the Congressional campaign and election of 1922, the Workers Party of America will carry on extensive and intensive educational activities in the unions. It will formulate its demands upon the capitalist government in accordance with the actual status of the class struggle, and the readiness and ability of the workers to fight for the interests of their class. Waging its campaign upon the most pressing and vital needs of the workers, it will ask for their endorsement at the polls. Today these needs are:

1. The protection of labor unions, and of the right to strike and picket in all industries.

2. An immediate appropriation of funds from the Municipal, State and Federal treasuries to relieve the distress of the unemployed—these funds to be dispensed through the labor unions and special councils created by the unemployed.

3. An obedience upon the part of the capitalists and the governing bodies to their own laws regarding the rights of the individual, and the laws won from them by organized labor.

4. The protection of the lives and civil rights of the negroes.

5. The cessation of preparation for new wars.

6. The withdrawal of American military and governing forces from Haiti, Santo Domingo, Porto Rico; independence for the Philippine and Pacific Islands.

7. The resumption of trade relations with Russia, and the recognition of the Soviet Republic.

The Agricultural Problem

The laboring masses of America are divided into two principal sections, the industrial workers and the farm workers. The farm workers are proletarian and semi-proletarian. The proletarian worker plays a comparatively insignificant role, however, in American farm life. The semi-proletarians, the tenants and mortgaged owners of comparatively small farms, are the typical agricultural class. As a result of their environment, their psychology and political demands are individualistic. But nevertheless, they are beginning to realize that ultimate success depends upon joint action with the industrial workers.

Today the farmers are subjected to an exploitation unequaled in their entire history. Mortgages in some states have increased 500 per cent since the census of 1910. The farmers have been producing crops for the past two years at a loss of billions of dollars. The form of exploitation and oppression varies in each section in accord with the type of farming and the social conditions that prevail. In the south the whites are incited to mob the negroes. In the west wages are kept down by maintaining a surplus of migratory labor. In the middle west the bankers control by ownership of farm mortgages and they dictate the wages to be paid by farmers to harvest workers, forcing them low enough to maintain the antagonism between these two exploited groups of producers. In the east, the natural individualism of the farmers is fostered by the capitalists. Their agents dominate in every farm organization. They control the agricultural press, in which their propaganda openly blames farm exploitation upon the wage demands of the city workers.

The resistance of the farmers to capitalist exploitation manifests itself in a tremendous development of farm organizations. There are two hundred and sixty-five national farm organizations, with a dues paying

membership of over two million. In the south, there are secret Negro organizations and white tenant unions; in the west there are farm labor unions; in the middle west, large grain-marketing organizations and cooperatives; in the east, many local commodity organizations and societies. These organizations have struggled unsuccessfully against exploitation. They have failed because they were struggling against only one phase of exploitation, and were not organized as a part of the working class fighting for the overthrow of capitalism.

The Workers Party will seek to unite the struggles of the farmers with those of the city workers along these lines. It will develop for this purpose conscious groups of farmers in all farm organizations, and will expose the capitalist agents and their propaganda. It will make every effort to participate actively in the daily struggle of the farmers.

The Race Problem

The Negro workers in America are exploited and oppressed more ruthlessly than any other group. The history of the Southern Negro is the history of a brutal terror—of persecution, rape and murder. The formal abolition of slavery made it possible for the northern caiptalists to penetrate the south and to bring cheap Negro labor north. This was, however, detrimental to the interests of southern capitalists, and they have sought by every means to maintain the enslavement of the Negro. It is in order to subjugate him and break his spirit, that secret murder societies such as the Ku Klux Klan have been established.

Because of the anti-Negro policies of organized labor the Negro has despaired of aid from this source, and has either been driven into the camp of labor's enemies, or been compelled to develop purely racial organizations which seek purely racial aims. The Workers Party will support the Negroes in their struggle for liberation, and will help them in their fight for economic, political and social equality. It will point out to them that the interests of the Negro worker are identical with those of the white. It will seek to end the policy of discrimination

followed by organized labor. Its task will be to destroy altogether the barrier of race prejudice that has been used to keep apart the black and white workers, and weld them into a solid union of revolutionary forces for the overthrow of their common enemy.

Labor Union Program

Taking advantage of the world industrial crisis, and the consequent unemployment, the capitalists of the United States have launched a war of extermination upon the unions, including the most conservative as well as the aggressive and virile unions. They are determined to smash the unions, and reduce the workers far below their pre-war standard of wage and working conditions. They are determined to take from the hands of labor, with interest, the cost of the unparalleled destruction caused by the world war.

In spite of heroic resistance from the organized masses, this plot is being carried out to an alarming extent. Orgies of wage reduction are the order of the day. Hours are being lengthened, union conditions broken down. The unions are bending beneath the onslaught of capitalism.

In this greatest crisis of the Labor movement, the officialdom of almost all the American unions have betrayed their utter cowardice, stupidity and even bad faith. Instead of rallying the organized workers to positive and energetic resistance, and launching a counter-attack upon the capitalists by demanding some of the good things promised them during the war—instead of this course, dictated by elemental common sense and good faith to the workers they are supposed to lead, they are conniving, openly and secretly, with the workers' enemies. They are surrendering point by point, under one pretext and another, and a gradual demoralization of the union ranks is the result.

Facing this crisis, the Workers Party of America rejoices to be able to point out that, for the first time in our labor history, an adequate and comprehensive program has been laid out for the militant workers in the labor unions. The First World Congress of Red Labor

Unions, held in Moscow in July, 1921, brought together the wisdom and experience of the revolutionary labor movement of the whole world. Out of this congress came a clear and definite program, which if applied with intelligence and energy by the militant workers, will lead the American labor union movement out of the present disruption, and place it on the high road to social and economic power—the road to the Workers' Republic.

The Workers Party, therefore, calls upon the class-conscious workers of America to rally to the banner of the Red International of Labor Unions. It calls upon them to consider carefully the Resolutions and Decisions of the First Congress of the Red International, and to put its policies into effect: (1) by joining the labor union of their trade or calling, (2) by organizing a minority group with all other class-conscious workers in such union, or joining such militant bodies of this nature as already exist, (3) by using the energies of these class-conscious groups to place militant, aggressive programs into effect in their unions, and depose the conservative or reactionary officials that stand in the way or oppose.

The Workers Party stands for the principle of one union in each field. Dual unionism must be done away with. The revolutionary workers must remain within the mass organizations of the backward workers. The custom of seceding from the mass unions to form smaller unions on the ground that the mass union is reactionary, must be abandoned. Attempts of the officialdom to expel revolutionary individuals or groups must be resisted by every possible means. The policy shall be consolidation, not division.

RESOLUTION OF LABOR UNION ACTIVITY

Appendix to the Program of the Workers Party.

The Workers Party of America will call upon the existing revolutionary industrial unions to cooperate in its thoroughly modernized plan to revolutionize the four or five million organized workers in the reactionary unions of the United States. It will ask them to join in the

effort to change the structure of the reactionary trade unions into the industrial union form, and to eject from control of these unions the reactionary leaders

The Red International of Labor Unions, composed as it is of the most trusted and experienced representatives of the revolutionary unions in all countries, is an instrument for bringing to the unions of each country the tactical wisdom and scientific knowledge of revolution gained in the experience of all. The Workers Party will urge the revolutionary unions existing in the United States to follow the policies outlined by the Red Labor Union International.

Abandon Dual Unionism

In industries dominated by the trade unions, and where the revolutionary industrial unions are either non-existent or a minor factor, the Workers Party will urge the revolutionary unionists to abandon their dual unionism, and concentrate their activities in the trade unions. Such industries are, principally: coal mining, building trades, printing trades, metal trades, clothing trades, railroads, general transport, theatrical trades, electrical supply trades, and meat-slaughtering. In all these industries the trade unions are strong, containing the overwhelming majority of the workers that are organized; the revolutionary industrial unions have either no organization at all, or one that is negligible in strength and influence. Nor can the situation be changed by the tactics heretofore used. For the revolutionary industrial unions to continue a dual organization in these industries, and to insist upon the support of all revolutionists in this policy, will simply block the performance of real work. The revolutionary industrial unions must be induced to stop maintaining or attempting to form, dual unions in such industries. What few members they now have in such unions must be induced to enter the old unions and organize themselves therein as minority groups.

Support the Strongest Unions

In certain industries the trade unions are weak, and the revolutionary industrial unions have developed some

degree of constructive organization. These industries are, principally: metal mining, textile, lumber, boot and shoe manufacturing, baking and candy making, automobile manufacturing, hotels and restaurants, and agriculture. Where such revolutionary industrial unions have attained a membership superior to, or approximately equal to, the membership of the reactionary trade unions, the Workers Party will vigorously support the revolutionary industrial union with a view to its absorbing the entire industry. Where several revolutionary industrial unions have a foothold in the same industry, the aggregate of their membership being greater than, or approximately equal to, that of the reactionary trade unions, the policy will be to unite them. Failing of that, the Workers Party will support the union having the greatest hold upon the industry.

Support Industrial Amalgamation

The Workers Party will support all of the present tendencies among the unions to break down craft aloofness, and draw closer to the industrial form. The movement of the International Association of Machinists to introduce industrial union forms into the American Federation of Labor, as well as the movement for closer federation and subsequent amalgamation of the various crafts of the railroad brotherhoods, will be supported, without giving support to the reactionary leaders who have been drawn into a half-hearted identification with these movements.

Don't Destroy the Unions

The effort of the revolutionary groups within the trade unions should not be to split or destroy these unions, but while keeping the membership as intact as possible, to throw off from each union its bureaucratic superstructure. The subject matter of agitation for the revolutionary groups should be the questions arising in the everyday struggle of the unions. Revolutionary principles should be applied to their solution in a practical manner—never in a merely theoretical or abstract manner. The revolutionists must be more practical than their opponents. They must be more efficient and hard-

working in handling the daily routine of the union, at the same time that they strive with all their power to bring it into line with the more advanced unions for the proletarian revolution.

Resist Expulsion ; Stand for Unity

The revolutionists must continue their revolutionary propaganda at any cost. But wherever humanly possible they must avoid being expelled from the unions either as groups or individuals. They must remember that their doing any propaganda at all is dependent upon their remaining in contact with the masses in the unions. In case of the expulsion of fragments from the unions, these fragments must refuse to recognize their expulsion, and make a continuous fight to remain a part of the union, or contend for their claim to be themselves the original union. In case of expulsion of entire unions from the American Federation of Labor, such expulsion must be resisted as long as possible, for the purpose of exposing the motives of the bureaucracy. The same rule applies to the railroad brotherhoods and the independent unions generally.

The Workers Party will formulate programs for individuals and groups that may be expelled from unions by the reactionary bureaucracy, finding solutions free wherever possible from the old mistake of dual unionism.

Within all trade and industrial unions the Workers Party will organize and promote revolutionary groups, and will help to crystallize around such groups larger blocks of sympathetic workers, growing in understanding. The Party will supply these groups with literature, information, instruction as to methods, and so endeavor to co-ordinate the entire left-wing of the American Labor Movement within the existing unions.

Constitution of the Workers Party of America

Article 1—Name and Purpose

Section 1—The name of this organization shall be THE WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA. Its purpose shall be to educate and organize the working class for the abolition of capitalism through the establishment of the Workers' Republic.

Article II.—Emblem

Section 1—The emblem of the party shall be the crossed hammer and sickle with a circular margin having at the top, "Workers Party of America," and underneath, "Workers of the World, Unite."

Article III.—Membership

Section 1—Every person who accepts the principles and tactics of the Workers Party of America and agrees to submit to its discipline and engage actively in its work shall be eligible to membership.

Section 2—Applicants for membership shall sign an application card reading as follows:

"The undersigned declares his adherence to the principles and tactics of the Workers Party of America as expressed in its program and constitution and agrees to submit to the discipline of the party and to engage actively in its work."

Section 3—Every member shall join a duly constituted branch of the party if such exists in the territory where he lives. Applicants living in territories where the Workers Party of America has no organized branch may become members at large.

Section 4—All applicants for membership must be endorsed and recommended by two persons who have been members for not less than three months. An applicant must be present in person when his application is acted upon.

Section 5—Applications for membership shall not be acted upon finally until one month after presentation.

In the meantime the applicant shall pay initiation fees and dues and shall attend all meetings. This rule shall not apply to charter members of new branches nor to those who make application to the newly organized branches during the first month.

Article IV.—Units of Organization

Section 1.—The basic units of organization of the Workers Party of America shall be:.

a) The Branch, to consist of not less than five members.

b) Members-at-large, who shall be connected with the nearest district organization.

c) Such special forms of local organization as may be authorized by the Central Executive Committee.

Section 2.—Two or more branches in the same city shall form a City Central Committee. The City Central Committee may also include branches in adjacent territory.

Section 3.—The Central Executive Committee is empowered to designate the boundaries of the district organizations (which may include more than one state or parts of states), such boundaries to be fixed with regard to economic rather than state divisions. For the purpose of carrying on parliamentary activity, the City Central Committees and branches in any state shall constitute the state organization. The entire supervision of this activity shall be assigned by the Central Executive Committee to the district organization best equipped for this purpose.

Article V.—Administration

Section 1.—The supreme body of the Workers Party of America shall be the Convention of the Party.

Section 2—Between conventions the Central Executive Committee elected by the convention shall be the supreme body of the Party and shall direct all the activities of the Party.

Section 3.—The administrative power of the district shall be vested in the Annual District Convention.

Section 4.—Between District Conventions the administrative powers of the district shall be vested in the District Committee elected by the District Convention. District organizers appointed by the Central Executive Committee

shall be members of the District Committee and carry on their work under its supervision.

Section 5.—The City Central Committee shall consist of delegates elected by the branches. Every branch shall have at least one delegate. The City Central Committee shall meet at least twice a month. The City Central Committee shall elect a secretary, executive committee and such other officers as may be found necessary. The District Executive Committee reserves the right of approval of secretary.

Article VI—Conventions

Section 1.—The Convention is the supreme body of the Party, and shall be called by the Central Executive Committee at least once a year.

Section 2.—Emergency conventions, with all the powers of regular conventions, may be called by the Central Executive Committee or upon demand of District Organizations representing 40 per cent of the membership.

Section 3.—The number of delegates to the National Convention shall be determined by the Central Executive Committee. Delegates shall be apportioned to the districts according to membership based upon average dues paid for the period of four months prior to call for the convention. The districts shall apportion the number to be elected by city conventions on the same basis.

Section 4.—Delegates to the national convention shall be elected by district conventions. Branches in organized cities shall elect delegates to a city convention which in turn shall elect the delegates to the district conventions. The number of delegates to which each branch is entitled shall be decided by the City Central Committee according to membership as above. When there is no city central organization the branch shall elect delegates directly to the district convenion.

Section 5.—City and district secretaries and organizers shall attend the conventions of their respective units and shall have a voice but no vote unless elected as delegates themselves.

Section 6.—City and district conventions may elect as

their delegates members of the Party from units outside their territorial divisions.

Section 7.—At the same time that the call for the convention is issued the Central Executive Committee shall submit to every branch for discussion the Agenda and other propositions that are to come before the convention. At least sixty days before the Convention the Party Press shall be opened for discussion of important Party matters. District Committees may submit propositions to be included in the Agenda .

Section 8.—Delegates to the National Convention shall be paid railroad expenses and a certain amount per diem to be determined by the Central Executive Commtitee.

Article VII.—Central Executive Committee

Section 1.—Between Conventions the Central Executive Committee shall be the supreme body of the Party and shall direct all its activities.

Section 2.—The Central Executive Committee shall consist of seventeen members elected by the Convention. The Convention shall also elect seven alternates, to fill vacancies in order of vote. When the list of alternates are exhausted the Central Executive Committee shall have the right of cooptation.

Section 3.—The Central Executive Committee shall elect the Executive Secretary and Chairman of the Party, and all other officers.

Section 4.—The Central Executive Committee shall appoint District Organizers and all national officials. It shall create sub-committees for the proper direction of its activities.

Section 5.—The Central Executive Committee shall make a monthly report of the Party activities and of Party finances, itemized by districts.

Section 6.—The Central Executive Committee shall divide the country into districts in accordance with Article IV, Section 3, provided that the boundary lines of the districts shall not be changed within a period of four months prior to the national convention.

Section 7.—A complete audit and accounting of all Party funds shall be made every six months.

Section 8.—All press and propaganda activities shall be under the full control of the Central Executive Committee.

Article VIII.—District and Subordinate Units

Section 1.—The Central Executive Committee shall appoint District Organizers for each district.

Section 2.—Every district organizer shall make complete reports to the District Executive Committee as to the general Party work in his district. He shall submit and carry out the instructions and decisions of the Central Executive Committee. He shall make remittance and financial statements regularly to the Central Executive Committee and shall also submit financial statements to the membership in his district at last once a month.

Section 3.—District conventions shall be held within thirty days of the national convention. The district convention shall elect six members to the District Executive Committee.

Section 4.—These six members, together with the District Organizer, who shall be a member of the District Executive Committee with voice and vote, shall supervise the activities of the district and shall regularly submit the minutes of their meetings to the Central Executive Committee. All actions of the District Committee are subject to review by the Central Executive Committee.

Section 5.—The District Executive Committee shall determine the boundaries of the city locals.

Section 6.—The City Central Committee shall consist of delegates representing branches in accordance with their relative memberships. Each branch shall be represented by at least one delegate. The City Central Committee shall have supervision of all activities in the local and shall make regular reports of its work to the District Executive Committee.

Section 7.—The City Central Committee shall elect a city executive committee, consisting of from 5 to 7 members, which shall act for the city central committee between meetings.

Section 8.—The Branch shall consist of members, as provided in Article III. Section 1. It shall elect an executive committee, branch organizer, delegates to the City Central

Committee, and such other officers as may be considered necessary.

Article IX.—Language Sections

Section 1.—Members speaking a common language other than English may organize into a "Language Branch."

Section 2.—Language branches of the same language, with an aggregate membership of at least 400, shall be formed into a Language Section. There shall be only one section in each language, and all language branches must affiliate with their respective language sections.

Section 3.—All language branches shall be integral parts of the party structure in their localities, and shall perform and carry out all Party functions and obligations.

Section 4.—Shortly after Party Conventions, national language conferences shall be held. Those conferences shall formulate plans for education and propaganda in their repective languages, subject to the approval of the Central Executive Committee. All actions of these conferences shall be in strict conformity with the decisions of the Party Convention and the Central Executive Committee. Expenses of these conferences shall be borne by the language sections.

Section 5.—The language section conference shall elect a bureau to administer its affairs and a suitable number of alternates. The bureau shall elect the editors and officers and shall supervise all activities of their respective language sections, subject to the approval of the Central Executive Committee.

Section 6—The Central Executive Committee shall have the right to disapprove the members elected by the conference to the language bureaus and fill such vacancies from among the alternates.

Section 7.—The Central Executive Committee may appoint a fraternal member to every language section executive committee with voice but no vote.

Section 8.—The bureau shall have the right to appoint district language section organizers subject to the approval of the Central Executive Committee. All organizers shall work under the supervision of the Party District Organizers in the various districts.

Section 9a)—National Yanguage Bureaus shall translate and transmit all statements, circulars and communications addressed to the membership by the Central Executive Committee within one week after their receipt.

Section 9b)—Language branches shall purchase their due stamps directly from their national bureau, which shall purchase due stamps from the Central Executive Committee at 30 cents each, and sell same to its branches at a price determined by the Language Section conference. The branches to sell due stamps to members at 50 cents. The national office shall remit to the district organization ten cents, and to the city local five cents for each stamp sold to language sections.

Section 9c)—The National Language Bureau shall account to the Central Executive Committee regularly for all funds entrusted to it and shall make regular financial reports to the Central Executive Committee regarding all the institutions under its control. Its accounts shall be subject to the audit of the Central Executive Committee. Special assessments may also be levied by the National Language Bureaus on the membership with the approval of the Central Executive Committee.

Section 10—a) Language Bureaus and Language Sections shall have no power to suspend, expel or reorganize affiliations. All disciplinary powers are vested exclusively in the regular Party organization machinery.

b) Language Bureaus and Sections may recommend such suspension, expulsion or reorganization to the party units having jurisdiction.

Article X.—Discipline

Section 1.—All decisions of the governing bodies of the Party shall be binding upon the membership and subordinate units of the organization.

Section 2.—Any member or organization violating the decisions of the Party shall be subject to suspension or expulsion by the organization which has jurisdiction. Charges against members shall be made before branches, subject to appeal by either side to the City Central Committee or to the District Executive Committee, where there is no city organization. Charges against a branch shall be made before the City Central Committee or before the District Executive Committee where there is no city organization. Decisions of the City Central Committee in the case of branches shall be subject to revision by the district organization. Charges against state or district organization shall be made before the Central Executive Committee.

Section 3.—Each unit of the Party shall restrict its activities to the territory it represents.

Section 4.—A member who desires to transfer his membership to another branch shall have a transfer card from the financial secretary or organizer of his branch. No branch shall receive a member from another branch without such transfer card and upon presentation of the card the secretary of the branch receiving same shall make inquiries about the standing of the member to the secretary issuing the card.

Section 5.—All party units shall use uniform application cards, dues books and accounting records, which shall be printed by the National Organization.

Section 6.—Any suspended or removed member of the Central Executive Committee shall have the right to appeal in writing or in person to the next National Party Convention.

Article XI.—Dues

Section 1.—Each applicant for membership shall pay initiation fees of fifty cents, which shall be receipted for by an initiation stamp furnished by the Central Executive Committee. The entire sum shall go to the National Organization.

Section 2.—Each member shall pay fifty cents per month in due stamps, which shall be sold to the state or district organizations at 25 cents. State or District Organizations shall sell stamps to the City Central Committee and to the branches where there is no city central committee at 35 cents. The City Central Committee shall sell stamps to branches at 40 cents.

Section 3.—Special assessments may be levied by the National Convention or Central Executive Committee. No member shall be considered in good standing unless he purchases such special assessment stamps.

Section 4.—Husband and wife belonging to the same branch may purchase dual stamps, which shall be sold at the same price as the regular stamps. Special assessments must be paid by both husband and wife.

Section 5.—Members unable to pay dues on account of unemployment, strikes, sickness or for similar reasons shall upon application to their financial secretary be furnished with exempt stamps. Provided that no state or district organizations shall be allowed exempt stamps in a proportion greater than ten per cent of its monthly purchases of regular stamps.

Section 6.—Members who are three months in arrears in payment of their dues shall cease to be members of the Party in good standing. Members who are six months in arrears shall be stricken from the rolls. No member shall pay dues in advance for a period of more than three months.

Article XII.—Headquarters

Section 1.—The National Headquarters of the Party shall be located in the city designated by the Convention.

Article XIII.—Qualifications

Section 1.—Members of the Central Executive Committee, Executive Secretary, Editor, and all candidates for political office, must have been (a) members of the party for two years at the time of their nomination, or (b) members of a charter organization, or members of any organization affiliating as a body within sixty days after the first convention.

Section 2.—One year's membership in the Party shall be necessary to qualify for membership on the District Executive Committee; six months for city central delegates and officers, three months (in the branch) for branch officers. This section shall not apply to branch officers or city central delegates of new branches.

DIGEST OF RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE FIRST CONVENTION OF THE WORKERS PARTY OF AMERICA

1. *The violent persecution of the organized workers* in all countries is but an indication of the intensification of the class struggle, the W. P. exposes the true character and intentions of the destructive efforts of the masters and by uniting its forces with those of the workers of all nations, takes up the challenge.

2. *The American Legion* is the creature of the capitalist class, its function is to try to terrorize labor.

The World War Veterans have at all times proved their loyalty to the workers, they are endorsed by the Workers Party and all ex-soldiers urged to join.

3. *Education* in the history and problems of the labor movement and the fundamental principles and tactics of revolutionary Marxism is one of the most important functions of the W. P. of A. The Central Executive is directed to immediately endeavor to establish workers' schools in the chief industrial centers and to organize study courses in the locals and sections of the party.

4. *Russian Relief and Reconstruction* calls for immediate help by organized labor; the W. P. of A. pledges itself to do all within its power to carry the urgent appeal of Soviet Russia to the great masses of the American working class, and to support any organizations or movement aiming to aid Russian relief and reconstruction.

5. *Soviet Russia.* The Russian revolution is the first successful uprising of the masses under the leadership of the working-class against private ownership of capitalists and landlords in modern society. For the first time since the establishment of capitalism, the Russian workmen nationalized all the larger industrial establishments and declared the land the property of the nation to be used only by those who work on it with their own hands. Thus, the Russian revolution marks a new era in the history of our times and proves beyond doubt that, once organized in a strong party and conscious of its historic aim, the working class may be able to seize the power of state in time of a revolution, establish proletarian dictatorship, and abolish private ownership in order to establish the Socialist order.

Though the Soviet government of Russia, the government of

workers and peasants being harrassed by constant war on numerous fronts, compelled to fight for its very existence against the combined efforts of the capitalist states, bled white by economic blockade and exhaustion of its productive forces, saw fit to reintroduce capitalism under state control, the rule of the proletariat remains the supreme power in Russia and the authority of the Soviets is now greater than ever. The Convention of the Workers Party of America sees in the Russian Revolution the vanguard of all class-conscious workers of the world and the herald of a new era, the era of Workers' Republics.

Whatever may be the future transformations and adaptations of the Russian Soviet regime, the Convention is fully aware of its colossal role in the stimulation of new thought and new regroupings among the workers of the world. Pledging itself to aid the Soviet Republic in its present crisis, the Convention sends its fraternal greetings to the workers of Russia and to their leaders, the fighters for a Communist order.

Long live the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic!

Long live the rule of the Russian Workers and Peasants!

6. *The revolutionary young workers' organizations* of Europe have long been the vanguard in all activity, every party is striving for the allegiance of the Youth, but 800,000 young workers in 40 countries are enrolled under the banner of the Young Communist International.

The United States presents a fertile field for such an organization, but at present all elements out of which it could be built are divided into unrelated groups. The W. P. pledges its aid to organize these young workers on a national scale in the following motion adopted by the convention: "That the Executive Committee of the Workers Party appoint a provisional national ogranization committee to amalgamate all existing militant young workers' organizations, to create new ones wherever possible, and to carry on all work preparatory to the calling of a national convention which will unite these forces and officially launch the Young Workers' League of America."

7. *Amnesty agitation* on behalf of prisoners in Federal penitentiaries must be extended to include those jailed under State statutes.

8. *Sacco and Vanzetti* were convicted of murder on insufficient evidence because they held radical views, the W. P. expresses its conviction of their innocence and demands a new trial for them.

9. *Howat and Dorchy* are imprisoned for resisting the further shackling of organized labor through the Kansas Industrial Court Law, the W. P. records its sympathy for them in this fight and its support of their followers.

10. *A monthly magazine* "to propagate the principles of Marxism and revolutionary understanding" is to be established.

11. *Mooney and Billings* are victims of one of the most dastardly crimes ever perpetrated by the capitalist courts of America, their innocence has been attested even by prominent officials of the capitalist State, yet every technicality is made use of to hold them in prison. The W. P. of A. pledges itself not to rest until they are free.

12. *The working class woman* is a wage slave and in addition must bear the burden of her sex. "The W. P. of A. recognizes the necessity for an intensified struggle to improve woman's conditions and to unify them in the common struggle with the rest of the working class against capitalism." It will take the initiative to organize and lead them in their struggle for economic freedom.

13. *The shop delegate system* has arisen in the struggle of the workers for more efficient and representative centralization of organized labor power than is afforded by the craft unions. The W. P. of A. recognizes that this form of organization affords the workers a better medium in their daily struggles and will also facilitate the building of their power and the taking over of production after the breakdown of capitalism.

14. *Pogroms,* involving the death of hundreds of thousands of Jews in Poland, Ukraine and Palestine, are characterized as the result of counter-revolutionary outrages.

15. *Liberation of Eugene V. Debs* and other class war prisoners was marked by the dispatch of the following telegram: "One hundred and fifty delegates convened to organize the Workers Party of America, and comrades assembled, greet with joy your homecoming and fervently hope that you will soon again be fighting in the ranks of the American working class in their struggle for emancipation."

And Now—

THAT YOU HAVE READ THIS

ARE YOU READY TO ACT ?

The Workers Party is a Party of Action

If You are for Action
instead of Sterility
and Inaction

JOIN THE WORKERS PARTY

And be actively engaged in the Struggle to Overthrow Capitalism

ALL POWER TO THE WORKERS

"Workers of the World Unite."

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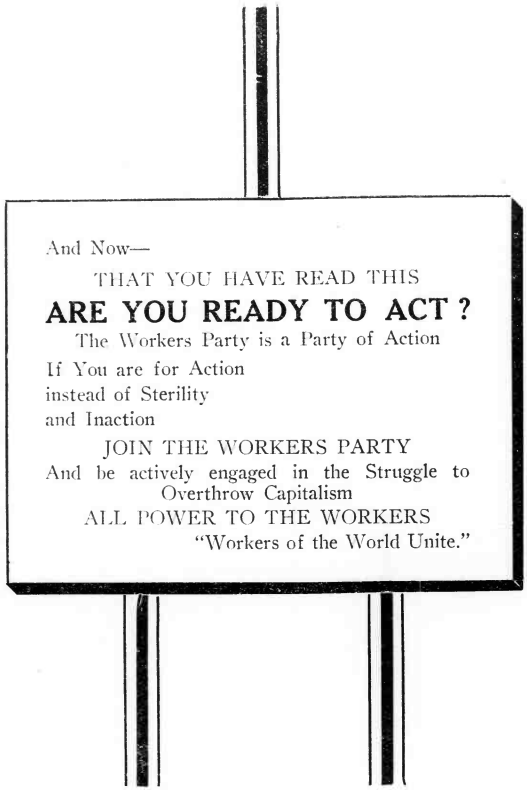

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